#### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

November 16-November 30, 2010

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Water Supply in Ghazni Province: Helping People Get Safe Drinking Water: Repairing a pipe scheme in the Dayak District of Ghazni Province has helped provide safe drinking water to 8,617 beneficiaries. Inaugurated on November 8, 2010, the network now produces 16 liters per second for the community. After an assessment, the USAID-funded Afghan Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation (SWSS) project started to repair the existing pipe scheme which had been constructed in 1999.



Resident of Robat community in Dayak District collects water from newly repaired water tap.

PHOTO: USAID/SWSS

Additionally, SWSS constructed a bore well to complement the repaired water system and to

expand improved water access in the village. The newly repaired pipe scheme had not been functional for years, forcing people to collect water from long distances using donkeys and horses. For the handover ceremony, representatives from the provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development Directorate, Community Development Council (CDC) and community residents were present. Dr. Abdul Satar, CDC representative called the project an achievement for the people, saying, "We thank all for their contribution in regard to this project, for sure it will solve all water related problems which the community has faced for years."



Digging a well in Noorgal District, Kunar Province.

PHOTO: USAID/SWSS

Water Supply in Kunar Province: Providing Potable Water to People Suffering from Lack of Safe Drinking Water: Kunar is a mountainous province in the east of Afghanistan well endowed with water resources, but lacking infrastructure and management structures to ensure proper access to potable water for the population.

On November 6, 2010, the USAID-funded Afghan Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation (SWSS) project started the construction work of 27 bore wells in the Noorgal District of Kunar Province. The highest need for the population in this area is access to safe drinking water, which has been without hand

pumps and has only had open wells in bad condition. The new wells which are now under construction in the communities of Mia and Patan will benefit an estimated 2,835 people. The construction of new wells commenced with an inauguration ceremony in which



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provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (RRD) representatives and community members were present.

At the ceremony, Ahmad Shah, a district RRD department representative thanked USAID/SWSS, saying, "We are really happy for the assistance of USAID to these communities and would like to request for more projects to be initiated and implemented." Among the attendees at the ceremony was Ahmadullah, who is responsible for collecting water several times a day for his family. He stated, "I am very happy for this valued step, as we are really having problems due to lack of potable water and by getting a new well my time will be saved for other important life activities." According to community elders, until now the lack of drinking water has created disease and affected the lives of many children under the age of five.

Water Supply in Ghazni Province: Creating Healthy Communities by Providing Potable Water: Dayak is a district of Ghazni Province, which suffers from a lack of potable water. Most people in this district collect water from rivers, drains, and other unsafe sources. On November 8, 2010, the USAID-funded Afghan Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation (SWSS) project completed the construction of eight bore wells and handed them over to the community of Sulimanzai. Households that suffered water shortage problems and long trips to distant water sources are now happy and say the new wells will save them time and reduce water borne-disease. Gul Rahman said, "I'm very happy



New hand pumps shorten the distance for residents in Sulimanzai Community of Dayak District, Ghazni

PHOTO: USAID/SWSS

having wells close to my house and everyone is satisfied with new wells. I would like to call upon all community residents to take care of these wells and keep them operating." The new bore well will provide safe drinking water to an estimated 6,400 people. SWSS seeks to increase access to potable water supply and sanitation services in poor communities, decrease the prevalence of water-related diseases through household hygiene interventions and improve the sustainable management of potable water quality and quantity in project-assisted communities.

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Ayub Khan High School receives refurbished and repainted classrooms.

PHOTO: USAID/DAI

#### **STABILIZATION**

GIRoA Engages with Community Leaders in Maywand to Promote Stability: The District Governor of Maywand engaged with community leaders in November to take the lead in promoting stability and development. At a bi-monthly Development Shura, representatives identified significant community grievances amongst their villages and presented potential solutions. The District Governor vetted the communities' proposals and appealed to USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) project for assistance. Through the communities' cooperation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA), USAID's LGCD anticipates providing stabilization grants to 15 different villages in

early December to rehabilitate community-based infrastructure, including karez, canals, sewage systems, roads, and bakeries. This increase in trust between communities and GIRoA comes as USAID's LGCD, in coordination with the Kandahar Department of Education, completed physical work this week on three activities to rehabilitate and equip the Ayub Khan High School, currently the only operational school in Maywand District. The school received new boundary walls, refurbished buildings and athletic fields, classroom supplies, and sports equipment.

GIRoA Minister and U.S. Ambassador Lay Foundation for Kabul Cricket Stadium: On November 24, 2010, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) Finance Minister Omar Zakhilwal and U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl W. Eikenberry laid foundation stones at the National Cricket Stadium in Kabul. The ceremony inaugurated USAID-funded renovations to bring the stadium up to international standards. USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) project will provide 290 steel reinforcement bars to support the overall rehabilitation of the venue by USAID's Community Development Project— Kabul (CDP-K). In his remarks, Ambassador Eikenberry expressed appreciation for LGCD and CDP-K's successful collaboration, which also includes the rehabilitation of the Women's Park in Kabul and the ongoing renovation of sports facilities at Kabul University. The National Cricket Stadium initiative intends to promote



U.S. Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry and GIRoA Finance Minister participate in groundbreaking to rehabilitate the Kabul National Cricket Stadium.

DI IOTO, LICAID/ Issains Danton Coons



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stability through public works and the sport of cricket. Cricket became a source of pride for Afghanistan when the national team earned a spot in Division One of the International Cricket Council last year. With an estimated completion in July 2011, the stadium will seat 6,000 people and host domestic and international games.



School children at the Babrak School display their newly received backpacks.

PHOTO: USAID/DAI

**USAID's LGCD Provides Supplies for Schools** across Paktya Province: Insurgent presence in several areas of Paktya Province has limited children especially girls – from attending school. In addition, some parents choose not to send their children to school due to limited funding for school materials and classroom essentials. In collaboration with the Department of Education (DoE), USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) project delivered "school supply kits" to 26 schools in eight districts across the Paktya Province. These kits included backpacks, notebooks, pencils, paper, and other materials. Providing the kits is intended to encourage parents to send their children to school. This sub-project also delivered tents to 12 of the 26 schools, where a shortage of classrooms has forced

students to study outside. The Paktya Provincial Development Council took the lead in prioritizing the schools in need of support, and the DoE coordinated the delivery of supplies with school principals.

The activity aims to improve the learning environment for an estimated 9,900 male students and 1,900 female students at the selected schools. Abudal Satar, the principal of Peeran Middle School in the Gardez District said, "I am very happy with the supplies that have been provided by LGCD to our school. Because of their families' economic situations, some students could not afford to buy backpacks for themselves to keep their books safe. These backpacks will increase the safety of the students' books and materials, so they can be passed to next year's students."

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#### **Qazzaq Village Gets Back on the Road Again:**

Earlier in the year, the road connecting Qazzaq village to Pashtun Zarghun District center deteriorated because of insurgent presence and subsequent clearing operations by Coalition Forces. With approximately 85 percent of the village's residents engaged in agriculture and livestock, the road represents an economic lifeline for those selling goods and services at the district's markets. In coordination with the Hirat Department of Rural Reconstruction and Development, USAID's Local Governance and Community Development project worked with the Qazzaq Community Development Council (CDC) to provide a community stabilization grant to rehabilitate 2.5 kilometers of gravel road connecting the village to the main road in Pashtun



Community members contribute their labor to repair the Qazzag road.

PHOTO: USAID/DAI

Zarghun District. The CDC is headed by a reintegrated former insurgent commander, and the community demonstrated ownership of the activity by contributing labor for the rehabilitation and donating houses and land along the road in order to widen it. The improved road is intended to serve as a tangible manifestation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's presence in the area and to ease travel for an estimated 225 families in Qazzaq village to reach health services, schools, and markets at the district center.



Newly acquired publications for the ACKU collection proudly on display.

PHOTO: USAID/Asia Foundation

#### **EDUCATION**

USAID Helps Modernize and Expand Afghan's First Research Center: The Afghanistan Center at Kabul University (ACKU) is the only in-country comprehensive collection of Afghan-focused research material. Given the increasing digitalization of knowledge, the modernization of the collection has been a critical priority for the center. To digitalize and preserve the collection, and facilitate greater global connections and capabilities, USAID is providing new equipment and expanded services for ACKU. What would be commonplace in most research centers is groundbreaking for Afghanistan. In addition, with USAID assistance, ACKU was able to purchase essential books and materials for the collection,

including rare books documenting the Taliban era. Two new scanners have expanded the capacity to digitalize the collection, doubling the daily output, and vastly improving the



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quality of the archives. Additionally, a higher speed internet connection and four new public computers facilitate operations and expand opportunities for international communication and networking. Catalogue officers are now expanding their services, uploading the newest materials and permitting ACKU clients to access digitalized materials for the first time. Utilization of library call numbers online will assure effective organization as the catalogue expands. Finally, to deepen transparency and accountability, a newly hired finance and administration manager will begin work to strengthen the ACKU financial system and financial reporting.

An online catalog custodian commented on the changes, "ACKU has extended its services through its website for its users by creating an online catalog system. This current catalog bibliography is a guide to ACKU's more than 20,000 titles, a total of 60,000 volumes."

The ACKU was originally established in 1989 in Peshawar, Pakistan, during the unstable period of the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. It was transferred to the Central Library of Kabul University in July 2006 where it remains today as a foundational resource for Afghan students and academics. Kabul University and the Ministry of Higher Education have contributed funding and land for a new facility planned to open in May 2011.